

The Press Censured.

The State's and Item's Editorials Not Approved.

A BIG MASS MEETING.

Citizens Think the Lynching of Cooper Justifiable--Resolutions of Condemnation.

To the Editor of the State :

A crowd of people numbering between 1,500 and 2,000 were assembled here to day. The people came from every direction and four counties were represented. The boyd of the fiend, Cooper, was expected to be here, but for some reason was not sent from Sumter. Excitement was at high pitch and only the counsel of old and conservative citizens saved the parties who, previous to the murder, aided and harbored Cooper from being summarily dealt with. Several have been arrested and placed in jail, which is decidedly the best place for them now.

Resolutions, which have probably been sent you, were passed. Could you, Mr. Editor, have been in this community and witnessed the horrors that we have, you could not, as a human being, condemn the action of those citizens who killed Cooper. No torture which human agency could devise could inflict the punishment this devil deserved.

At the time Cooper made his visit through this village, Wednesday evening, there was hardly a house where there was not some one watching at the bedsides of sick ones. Grippe and pneumonia were in almost every house and the shock experienced during the last 10 days will probably, if not now, cause the death of more than one of our fair loved ones. Our citizens are profoundly grateful to those citizens who, leaving their homes and business, joined in the pursuit and only ceased when the fiend was captured and despatched and heartily endorse their action.

The bodies of the murdered family were interred yesterday in the presence of a large crowd of sympathizing friends.

Lynchburg, Jan 9

CITIZEN

RESOLUTIONS OF CENSURE.

Magnolia, Jan 9.

At a mass meeting held to day at Magnolia, composed of citizens from the counties of Sumter, Darlington, Clarendon and Florence, upon the motion of Capt. E. E. Keels, Thos. G. McLeod was elected chairman and L. V. Brown secretary, and after the object of the meeting had been stated the following resolutions were read and unanimously adopted:

Whereas a crime the most horrible that has ever occurred in the history of this State, has been committed here in the midst of a community noted for its peacefulness, for the respect for law and order, and

Whereas our citizens forbore to act precipitately on the first provocation, waiting for the law to take its course, and suffering as a consequence to their forbearance the murder of a whole family, the shocking details of which have been only partially portrayed by the press, and

Whereas, the murderer, taken red handed and defiant, was put to death by the outraged citizens, and

Whereas this community being totally unprepared to protect itself against the methods of murder pursued by this fiend, numerous families being sick, physicians endangered if sent for, delicate women unprotected and some of them dying from shock, and knowing the probability of delay and possible escape of this fiend, if left to the uncertain process of common law,

We, the citizens of this community, do heartily endorse the action of those of our citizens who shot this fiend to death, acting in meeting with the hearty sympathy and cooperation of citizens of Florence, Darlington and Clarendon. Therefore be it

Resolved, That we do denounce as uncalled for, unjust and as reflecting on the name of our community and State, the criticisms that have appeared in the following papers, viz: The State of Columbia and The Daily Item of Sumter

D. E. Keels,
J. A. Rhame,
Joseph Sanders,
T. N. Griffin,
S. Copeland,
S. D. M. Chaudler,
E. D. Smith,
L. V. Brown Secretary.

More Censure.

BISHOPVILLE, S. C., Jan 10.

Editor the Item :

We were too far from the "seat of war" to take part in the capture and killing of Simom Cooper, the blood-thirsty brute, but the sympathies of the people of this section are with

the brave men who risked their lives to effect his capture, and condemn the severe and unjustifiable criticisms uttered by the Item and State.

This incarnate fiend deserved instant death in any way it could be administered, and it is a pity they had not shot him to death at once. His crimes were of such a heinous nature as to forfeit all claim to humane treatment and no punishment that could have been inflicted would have been too severe or cruel.

The Columbia State charges the people of Sumter County with "violation of a flag of truce," and of "the most damning breach of the laws of war." This is certainly a heavy charge, and as unjustifiable as it is silly.

Let us suppose that it could be proven as an undoubted fact, that when Gen. Maceo met the Spanish officers under a flag of truce he fell to cursing them, threatening to kill the last one of them, and a Spanish officer had shot him down, would the editor of the State have condemned them for it in as severe terms as he and others have done the people of Sumter?

Now this negro, according to the full and accurate account given by the correspondent of the State, never surrendered, but came out of the house armed with pistol and razor, and advanced upon the men cursing and threatening to kill, and it is very probable if he had not been shot down some of the men would have fallen victim to his insatiate thirst for blood.

Those lusty warriors who stay safely ensconced behind their desks and only make their appearance in printers' ink after the battle is over, and all danger past, should be more moderate in their criticisms of men whose lives have been for hours in eminent peril, in their effort to rid the county of one of the most dangerous and desperate villains that ever cursed any country.

R. R.

The Man-Hunt in Sumter.

Human nature threw off all the trammels of civilization in Sumter county yesterday, and primitive passions wrought primitive justice. The county had its first lynching, and it was gruesome enough to last it a very long time.

It was too much to expect that Simon Cooper would not be killed if taken. He had committed a series of horrible crimes, had shown his readiness for others, and the people, white and colored, were maddened by rage and fear. The man had acted like a wild beast, he was hunted like a wild beast, and his ferocity challenged the death of a wild beast. The circumstances were so exceptional and his resistance was so murderous that if he had been shot down with arms in his hands we would not have offered a word of criticism. It was his life or the lives of his pursuers—a conflict which was war in petto rather than the ordinary process of legal arrest.

But we cannot justify nor condone the manner of his slaughter. He had been promised that he would not be killed if he laid down his arms and came naked out of his cabin. He dropped his rifle and came out clothed. Then he was set upon by members of the posse and shot down. After that he was hanged at leisure. While he did not technically comply with the sense of the capitulation by leaving his rifle and coming out of his fortress incapable of coping with his pursuers. The letter of the agreement may not have been violated but the spirit of it unquestionably was when he was shot and hanged. It was a shameful deed, for which the people of Sumter will blush when they come to their second thought. Granting that this was war; that law was not and could not be regarded; yet it was equivalent to the violation of a flag of truce—the most damning breach of the laws of war.

We do not know what else to say of the matter. It is idle to ask for the trial of the lynchers when they themselves made up the coroner's jury and the county rejoices in the death of the desperado. We can only point out and condemn what is unpardonable even in savagery.—The State, Jan. 9.

The State Denounced.

The State has been denounced for pointing out and condemning what seemed to us unpardonable. The State's criticisms of lynchings and lynchers have denounced before and they will doubtless be condemned again, for we do not expect lynchings to cease in South Carolina and we do expect to comment unfavorably on that class of lawlessness which lowers the standard of our civilization and is injurious to the moral tone and manhood of our people.

As is generally the case, nine-tenths of those who are supposed to have voted for the condemnatory resolutions, were probably in ignorance of what The State did say about the killing of Cooper. In a nutshell, here it is: "It was too much to expect that Simon Cooper would not be killed if taken. * * *

The man had acted like a wild beast, he was hunted like a wild beast, and his ferocity challenged the death of a wild beast. The circumstance were so exceptional and his resistance so murderous that if he had been shot down with arms in his hands we would not have offered a word of criticism. * * * But we cannot justify nor con-

done the manner of his slaughter. He had been promised that he would not be killed if he laid down his arms and came naked out of his cabin. He dropped his rifle and came out clothed. Then he was set upon by members of the posse and shot down. * * * it was equivalent to the violation of a flag of truce—the most damning breach of the laws of war."

Will our condemnors say the information on which we based our criticism was untrue? They do not deny it. If it was true, by what code of honor will they prove our conclusion false. Cannot, will not the men who condemn us understand that we did not speak for Simon Cooper, whose death was but paltry pay for his hideous crimes, but for the manhood of South Carolina. In his card, "Citizen" says:

"Could you, Mr. Editor, have been in this community and witnessed the horrors that we have, you could not, as a human being, condemn the action of those citizens who killed Cooper. No torture which human agency could devise could inflict the punishment this devil deserved."

Could the men have been there, "Citizen," who in past days made South Carolina a name of honor from ocean to ocean, and witnessed the horrors described, they would, if we mistake not, have been so inflamed by a just anger, that they, arms in hands, would have searched for the brute who like a rabid animal was spreading death in his path, and finding him would have rushed upon him, barricaded though he was, and killed him. Some may have died, but their names would be high up on the honor roll; those who survived would have had the consciousness of having bravely done their duty. The consciences of some South Carolinians would not have made them feel that this act was something to be ashamed of; they would have needed no resolutions of endorsement to justify their action. It was in the name of men who would so act that we condemned the manner in which Simon Cooper was killed. When he was empty-handed and had practically surrendered, the legal hangman should have been his executioner.

We are not disposed to harshly criticize those who have condemned us, nor to show that several statements in the resolutions are at variance with published reports, and that others are presented for the first time. We do not recognize them, however, as the spokesmen for Sumter, Darlington, Clarendon and Florence. The fact is that quite a number of the citizens of Sumter who were in the posse at the time of Cooper's capture, and were doubtless as much enraged at the cruel murder of the Wilson family, counseled against his killing, and for some time prevented others from taking the prisoner's life.

If the people of Lynchburg and vicinity could rise above their somewhat natural passions, and realize how the executions of lynchers, which began for one crime only, are extending in some sections to trivial offenses; how the once semi-respectable court of "Judge Lynch" has become a shield for the naturally lawless, bloodthirsty and cowardly, they might appreciate the honest purpose of The State in its censure. They would know then that the State's efforts are for South Carolina's betterment, and that only the action of its people will reflect on the good name of any community.

As we said in the beginning, The State has been censured for condemning lynchings before. On one occasion a mass meeting at Denmark—there is as much safety in a mass meeting as in a lynching party—declared that this paper was encouraging negroes to assault white women. That was a horrible charge and well calculated to make even cold blood boil, but after applying a little logic we were able to take the matter more philosophically. As the members of the mass meeting were supposed to have lynched a negro for an attempted assault, it was manifest they considered that a crime deserving immediate death. It was equally clear that a white instigator of a negro to such crime was more deserving of death than the negro. Then it appeared as plain as day that those who had lynched an unarmed negro, and then accuse The State of a worse crime, refraining from visiting Columbia and attempting to execute the editor, "in defense of our homes," convicted themselves of either an unspeakable base slander or of miserable poltroonery.

We are glad the Lynchburg people were moderate in their unjust condemnation.—Columbia State

Mass Meeting of Ten.

MAYESVILLE, S. C., Jan. 10, '97.

We, the undersigned citizens of Mayesville, in meeting assembled, do hereby endorse the action of the parties who took part in the lynching of Simon Cooper in this county, and believe he got his just desert. We have proof to the effect that he did not come out of the house unarmed as has been published, as he was ordered to do, but was armed with pistol and razor.

We believe, had the county officers taken prompt action in arresting Cooper, after the first killing, that the lives of the Wilson family and the negro would have been saved.

O. M. McCall, R. P. Williams, F. J. Bass, R. F. Deschamps, W. B. Merchaun, D. C. Deschamps, J. E. Allen, J. C. Anderson, W. E. Lea, A. J. Deschamps.

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CURES WHERE ALL ELSE FAILS.
Best Cough Syrup. Tastes Good. Use
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CONSUMPTION

The Jury Not Lynchers.

One of the Number Corrects "The State's" Impression.

To the Editor of the State :

The following is taken from the editorial, "The Man-Hunt in Sumter," in the issue of Saturday, the 9th instant:

"It is idle to ask for the trial of the lynchers when they themselves made up the coroner's jury, and the county rejoices in the death of the desperado."

In justice to one of that jury at least, I ask that you give publicity to a brief statement.

I was a member of the jury of inquest, but had absolutely nothing to do with the lynching, and knew nothing about it. In company with Mr. John B. Miller, I went to Jake Dargan's house where Simon Cooper was entrenched with the posse that left town about 9 o'clock Friday morning in response to the request for aid from the posse that surrounded the house at daylight. I remained on the scene until Cooper came out of the house and was shot down, but did not even see him shot, as I had gone into the house for the purpose of making an examination. When I heard the reports of the pistol and gun, with which he was shot down, I turned in the back door just in time to see him fall.

Shortly after he was shot Mr. Miller and I left the place and returned to town, and must have been a mile or more ahead of the lynching party.

I was summoned to serve on the jury in the city of Sumter, and returned to Green Swamp, four and a half miles from the city, where the lynching occurred, in company with Mr. W. H. Commander, special constable for Coroner Moses, who summoned the jury.

After the jury was sworn, Dr. S. C. Biker, who examined the body, said that he protested against any man who knew anything about the lynching serving on the jury, and Mr. J. K. Winn and I got up and asked to be excused on the ground that we were at Jake Dargan's house when Cooper was first shot.

It was decided that this did not debar us from serving, and although we asked to be excused anyhow, our request was not granted, as we had been already sworn in as jurors. None of the other jurors were present as far as was ascertained.

The lynching was bad enough as it was, but to let the statement that the lynchers made up the jury and exonerated themselves pass unchallenged, would be a still greater reflection on the county of Sumter and the men who composed the jury.

Very respectfully,
N. G. OSTEEN, JR.

[Editorial from the State]

We are glad to print a letter from Mr. N. G. Osteen, Jr., of Sumter, showing that he, and probably all the other members of the jury of inquest on the body of Simon Cooper, had no connection with his killing. Our inference that the members of the jury were drawn from the lynching party was a natural one in view of the reports that the coroner assembled his jury immediately after the lynching, and the absence of information that any others than the lynchers were in the neighborhood. That such a shocking travesty was not performed is gratifying; but surely this summary inquest, on the very heels of the hanging and without a real effort to ascertain the names of the lynchers, was something far from creditable to the coroner and such others as aided him. The object of inquest in cases of murder is to discover the murderers; the object of this hurried inquest seems to have been to prevent the discovery of the murderers. Therefore an officer of the law perverted the law to shield lawlessness.

As there must be a good many more than ten citizens in Mayesville, Sumter county, the resolutions passed at a mass meeting of the ten will not have much weight. We are glad that no more of the people of that town have committed themselves to the proposition that treachery is ever commendable. What if the negro did have a pistol and razors on his person? He had abandoned his rifle and surrendered, and did not attempt to use pistol or razor until he was attacked after surrendering. The lives of none of the posse was menaced. If Cooper did not mean to accept the conditions offered him and resign himself to the law what did he mean by leaving a stout log cabin, a good rifle and a bag of cartridges to come out into the open, without weapon in his hand, to be covered by a dozen rifles? Nothing but the theory of panic, of shivering cowardice so great as to dethrone reason, can account for his killing unless it was an act of deliberate treachery and cruelty.—The State

Yesterday while Paul Davis, a negro, was being conveyed from Henrico county Va., jail to the court house, at a few feet distance, to be tried for criminal assault on Cora Twitchell, a white girl, the father of the girl, C. A. Twitchell, shot the negro, inflicting a wound that may prove fatal. Twitchell was immediately arrested by the officers having Davis in charge and locked up.

From Daily Item, Jan. 12 WORDS OF COMMENDATION.

Mr. Editor: In common with most of your readers, I am much pleased with your editorial headed, "Mass Meeting Censured." Coming as it does from an eye witness of most of the circumstances connected with this deplorable affair, it contains statements of facts not based on hearsay evidence, but upon actual knowledge, which gives the article much value; and I respectfully submit that the opinions set forth are of equal importance. You have expressed these opinions clearly and without equivocation, and I trust and believe that you will receive the cordial endorsement of the good people of Sumter. LAW.
Sumter, Jan. 11, 1897.

Editor Daily Item: I hear some talk around the city to the effect that certain parties are very vehement in denunciation of the Item for the position it has taken in regard to the recent lynching. They threaten to boycott the paper. Now, Mr. Editor, you need feel no uneasiness. Men of this class are not able to hurt anybody—though they may show considerable bravery (?) in an attack on a dead body. You are sustained by a large majority of the cool, substantial men of the city. Please accept congratulations for your courageous language from
A CONSTANT READER.

WORDS OF CONDEMNATION.

To the Editor of the Sumter Item: Please allow me space in your paper to criticize your comments on the killing of Simon Cooper. If you simply meant to condemn the hanging of him when dying, and then ridding his body with bullets, I think myself it was unnecessary. But a careful reading of your comments leads to the conclusion that you condemned the first shooting as well. Very true that he was surrounded by nearly a hundred armed men, and probably escape was impossible; but he was not secured, and might have wounded or killed several of them if he had been allowed to get out his pistol and razor. You surely do not mean to say you would advocate taking that risk.

After his shooting one man and wounding several others, and defying arrest on Jan. 1st, Magistrate Goodman should have deputized several determined men to take him "dead or alive," if he had the authority to issue such a warrant. And if he had no such authority the deputies should have taken no chances with him, but getting the "drop" on him they should have ordered him to throw up his hands, and any motion to use his weapons should have been met with several loads of buckshot. And any jury in the State would render the verdict "Well done."

One would suppose from your comment and the "indignant outcry from a majority of the crowd" that you and they would rather see innocent blood flow like water and the majesty of the law be upheld, than the summary killing of this fiend in human form. Several with whom I have talked agree with me, that such a position is absurd to say the least, and I think you will see it that way when you reflect further on the subject.

Since writing the above I have talked with several of our best citizens, and they say the newspapers had about convinced them that lynching is wrong, but this affair has brought it home to us, and as long as law officers let such fiends go at large without any effort to capture them, lynch law is the only practical remedy. When the officers of the law allow criminals to run at large until the community is outraged by some such crime, there is no use to preach that the "majesty of the law must be upheld." One such horror as the people of Lynchburg have experienced does more to mould public sentiment than a thousand theoretical editorials on the upholding of the law. The "majesty of the law" was more trampled upon when her sworn officers allowed Simon Cooper liberty to run his fiendish course than when outraged citizens ended his bloody career by shooting him down and hanging him. Respectfully,

E. W. DABBS

[If Mr. Dabbs has read for himself what the editor of the Daily Item has written, he should not be at a loss to understand our position. But for his benefit we will say: Simon Cooper came out of the house with his hands up, and under the promise that his life would be spared for the time. The editor of the Item was with those who were the nearest to the house in which Cooper was, and objected to the promise being made. We were in a position to drive him from his stronghold, when he would doubtless have met the fate he deserved, but being induced by a majority of others to cease our dynamic operations, and Cooper being allowed to surrender, we cannot approve of his being then shot down in violation of the promise made, and while holding up his hands, and held by strong men.—Editor of the Item.]

One Brave and Farsighted Man.

Editor the Item: Please allow me space in your valuable columns to say: That Capt. D. E. Keels deserves praise for having done his full duty in the community during the falling ordeal through which we have recently passed. He was untiring in his efforts to apprehend the fiend and desperado, Simon Cooper; and if he had had the co-operation of the neighborhood, doubtless the most terrible tragedy which has ever been known in Sumter County would have been averted, and my dear old uncle, Ben E. Wilson, and his happy family would now be with us. But as this has been for several years a quiet neighborhood, no one seemed to realize the situation as Capt. Keels did, and none dreamed of such a tragedy; but his prediction on Tuesday "that unless something was speedily done, more blood would be shed," came too true.

I believe his prompt and energetic action, coupled with good judgment, in notifying the officials and people before and after the tragedy, prevented further bloodshed and aided in the speedy capture of the demon.

Capt. Keels has the heartfelt gratitude of myself and family for his kind and timely consideration of us and the entire community.

I commend the noble men for the end of the "crute," and wish that human endurance had prevailed so as to land him on the spot where the atrocious deed was committed.

Yours in sorrow,
J. E. WILSON.

Magnolia, S. C., Jan. 9, 1897.

The Anglo-American Arbitration Treaty.

Washington, Jan. 11.—The President sent the following message to the senate this afternoon, transmitting the Anglo-American general arbitration treaty:

To the Senate
I transmit herewith a treaty for the arbitration of all matters in difference between the United States and Great Britain. The provisions of the treaty are the result of long and patient deliberation and represent concessions made by each party for the sake of agreement upon the general scheme. Though the result reached may not meet the views of the advocates of immediate, unlimited and irrevocable arbitration of all international controversies, it is,

nevertheless, confidently believed that the treaty cannot fail to be everywhere recognized as making a long step in the right direction and as embodying a practical, working plan by which disputes between the two countries will reach a peaceful adjustment as a matter of course and in ordinary routine.

In the initiation of such an important movement it must be expected that some of the features will assume a tentative character looking to a further advance; and yet it is apparent that the treaty which has been formulated not only makes war between the parties to it a remote possibility but precludes those fears and rumors of war which of themselves too often assume the proportions of a national disaster. It is eminently fitting as well as fortunate that the attempt to accomplish results so beneficial should be initiated by kindred peoples, speaking the same tongue and joined together by all the ties of common traditions, common institutions and common aspirations. The experiment of substituting civilized methods for force as the means of settling international questions of right will thus be tried under the happiest auspices. Its success ought not be doubtful and the fact that its ultimate ensuing benefits are not likely to be limited to the two countries immediately concerned should cause it to be promoted all the more eagerly.

The example set and the lesson furnished by the successful operation of this treaty are sure to be felt and taken to heart sooner or later by other nations and will thus mark the beginning of a new epoch in civilization. Profoundly impressed as I am, therefore, by the promise of transcendent good which this treaty affords, I don't hesitate to accompany its transmission with an expression of my earnest hope that it may commend itself to the favorable consideration of the senate.

Grover Cleveland.

Executive Mansion, Jan. 11, 1897.

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